

## CITY OF GREENBELT

# POLICY AND INFORMATION GUIDE FOR RECOGNITION AND CONTRIBUTION GROUPS

For assistance

**Arts organizations:** contact Greenbelt's Arts Supervisor; 301-397-2208; [ndewald@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:ndewald@greenbeltmd.gov)

**Athletics, Recreation & Service groups:**  
contact the Recreation Dept. Director; 301-397-2200; [hirving@greenbeltmd.gov](mailto:hirving@greenbeltmd.gov)

## **DESIGNATIONS AND PRIVILEGES**

The City of Greenbelt welcomes the initiative and creativity of citizens who organize as volunteers to enhance the range of cultural, athletic, recreational and service opportunities available to Greenbelt residents. In support of these efforts, the City offers two forms of official designation for community organizations:

1. **RECOGNITION GROUP** status entails the following privileges:

- limited free use of Recreation Department facilities, in accordance with facility guidelines, for cultural, athletic, recreational and service activities which are open to the general public. *Note: free use of facilities is not available for political, religious, or income-generating activities.*
- inclusion in listings of contacts in City online and print publications as space allows
- eligibility to request in-kind program support (such as use of City equipment)
- eligibility to rent storage space at City facilities, when and if available
- eligibility to conduct fundraising activities at some City events, pending authorization

2. **CONTRIBUTION GROUP** status entails all of the above privileges, plus the opportunity to apply annually for financial assistance from the City. Organizations must function as a designated Recognition Group for at least one year immediately prior to the fiscal year for which support is requested. During this year, organizations are encouraged to build their membership, develop their programs, begin fund raising, and otherwise prepare to take on the added administrative functions of a Contribution Group as reflected in the Contribution Group application.

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

### **RECOGNITION and CONTRIBUTION GROUPS:**

1. **Mission.** The primary purpose of the organization should be to provide ongoing cultural, athletic, recreational and service opportunities which are open to the general public. Restrictions on residency and age for participation in the group's activities are permissible as appropriate (example: youth sports leagues).
2. **Political and religious organizations are not eligible** for Recognition or Contribution Group designation. **Political organizations** are defined as groups with or without a political party affiliation whose mission includes an effort to affect law or public policy at the local, county, state or federal level. Activities supporting such a mission might include but are not limited to: lobbying; campaigning; and appeals to voters. **Religious organizations** are defined as groups having both an affiliation with a religious organization or tradition and a mission which includes proselytizing activities and/or the facilitation of worship practices.
3. **Non-profit status.** Designation is available to not-for-profit organizations only, whether or not such organizations hold 501(C)3 designation from the Internal Revenue Service.

4. **Resident involvement.** The organization's activities should reflect significant participation by and service to Greenbelt residents.
5. **Location of activities.** At least 1/2 of the organization's activities should take place within the City of Greenbelt.
6. **Membership.** In the case of membership organizations, at least 2/3 of the organization's members should be Greenbelt residents. Exceptions may be granted in some instances.
7. **Liability insurance.** The City may require an organization to secure liability insurance for programming activities which the group intends to provide at City facilities. Insurance binders must be submitted to the Recreation Department business office before any such activities take place.
8. **Complementary services.** Groups will be eligible for financial and in-kind City support only for those programs which do not conflict with the services of existing Contribution Groups or the City of Greenbelt. Protection for the programs of any existing Contribution Group is contingent on the organization's fulfillment of all City requirements including fundraising, and on the organization being evaluated as "very good" or better by the Advisory Board which reviews their application.
9. **Community Pledge.** All Recognition and Contribution Groups are expected to uphold the Community Pledge, which states: "The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate people of many cultures, faiths, and races living together. By sharing together all are enriched. We pledge to foster a community which is respectful, safe, and fair for all people."

**These additional requirements for CONTRIBUTION GROUPS only:**

10. **Fundraising.** Any organization seeking Contribution Group status will be required to develop and implement a fundraising plan with a goal of raising at least one dollar for each dollar requested from the City of Greenbelt.
11. **Banking.** Each Contribution Group will be required to maintain a bank account in the group's name.
12. **Financial Review.** Prior to granting new or renewed Contribution Group status, the City of Greenbelt may at its option require an organization to provide a report from a certified public accountant reflecting the findings of a review of the organization's financial records. Any such review is to be conducted at the expense of the applicant organization.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are available at the Greenbelt Youth Center, Greenbelt Community Center, the Greenbelt Municipal Building, and on the City's website: [www.greenbeltnmd.gov](http://www.greenbeltnmd.gov). Applications for annual renewal of status will be provided to all current Recognition and Contribution Groups by the City. All completed applications will be reviewed by staff; organizations will be contacted for any corrections or clarifications as needed.

**RECOGNITION GROUPS:** Organizations may submit an initial application at any time. All first-time applications will be reviewed by the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board or the Greenbelt Park and Recreation Advisory Board, as appropriate. New applicants are required to send a representative to meet with the Advisory Board which is reviewing their application. First time applications will be approved or denied by the Greenbelt City Council.

Groups must re-apply annually for continued Recognition Group status by the application deadline for Contribution Groups (usually in February), regardless of the timing of the organization's original application. All applications will be reviewed by the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board or the Greenbelt Park and Recreation Advisory Board, as appropriate. The Advisory Boards may request to meet with a representative of an

organization applying for renewal of status in some instances. Applications for renewal will be approved by the Director of the Recreation Department or forwarded to the City Manager and City Council with reservations for further review.

**CONTRIBUTION GROUPS:** Organizations will have one opportunity each year to apply for Contribution Group status and funding, usually with a February deadline. All applications will be reviewed by the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board (AAB) or the Greenbelt Park and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB), as appropriate. The Advisory Boards may request to meet with a representative of the applicant organization. The AAB will evaluate applications from arts organizations based on the following criteria: service to the community, artistic merit, and organizational effectiveness. PRAB will evaluate all other applications based on service to the community and organizational effectiveness. All applications will be considered by the Greenbelt City Council at an annual work session in the spring which representatives of the organizations are encouraged to attend. Final decisions regarding designation and funding will be made by the Greenbelt City Council in June for the period of July 1 through June 30 (the City's fiscal year).

### **CONTRIBUTION GROUPS: FUNDING PROCEDURES AND RESTRICTIONS**

Organizations awarded funding by the Greenbelt City Council will be eligible to submit receipts for reimbursement of expenses. Receipts may be submitted at any time at the Recreation Department business office located at the Greenbelt Youth Center. Receipts should be accompanied by a note indicating the purpose of the expenditure. Reimbursements will be issued exclusively in the form of checks made payable to the organization itself and mailed to a designated officer, the organization's facility, or the organization's post office box. **For the fiscal year ending June 30, all receipts must be submitted by June 10. Any funds awarded to Contribution Groups must be used for the purposes stated in the organization's application.** The following restrictions also apply:

1. **City funds may not be used to purchase alcohol.** Alcohol may not be served at any City of Greenbelt facility.
2. **City funds may not be used for equipment purchases over \$250** without the permission of the Recreation Department Director. Permission is required even in instances where a purchase was specifically noted in the group's funding request; the City reserves the right to purchase a requested item directly and make it available to the group for use as an alternative to reimbursing the group for purchase of that item. In the event that permission is granted for an outside purchase, the City will retain the right to borrow any equipment purchased with City funds at times of mutual convenience. In the event that an organization should terminate its operation, all equipment purchased with funds from the City of Greenbelt will be returned to the Recreation Department.
3. **City funds may not be re-granted** to any other organization or party. City money may be paid to individuals and organizations only for goods purchased or services provided.
4. **City funds may not be used for any political or religious activities.** *Political activities* are defined as any activities intended to affect law or public policy at the local, county, state or federal level. These activities include but are not limited to: lobbying; campaigning; and appeals to voters. *Religious activities* are defined as worship practices and proselytizing activities.
5. Funding requests may be reduced or denied if an organization's proposed activities are found to be detrimental to City of Greenbelt facilities, programs, services, or financial interests.

**Any allocated funds not used by the organization by the conclusion of the fiscal year on June 30 will revert to the City and not carry over into the next fiscal year.**